

Engaging Youth around the Four Building Blocks



We strongly encourage educators to share the concept of the Four Building Blocks with children and youth. For youth who have experienced trauma and adversity, they've often developed a sense of shame around their past. They may have received messages (subtly or intentionally) that something is wrong with them or they are in some way broken. Learning about HOPE can provide a sense of optimism for the future. Additionally, we know all children, regardless of trauma exposure, need the Four Building Blocks to thrive. One way to share HOPE with youth is through the following activity.

1. Present the concept of HOPE to students (potentially during a Health and Wellness class or SEL time). You can share the [brief intro video](#) or create your own slides! The goal is to let students know that our brains and bodies respond to ALL experiences, good and bad! The more positive experiences we have, the better our health is all the way through the lifespan.
2. Hang four pieces of large paper around the room labeled with the Building Blocks (Relationships, Environments, Engagement, Emotional Growth).





HEALTHY OUTCOMES
FROM POSITIVE EXPERIENCES

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3. Have students rotate around the room and write the formal and informal ways they access each of the Building Blocks on the associated paper.
4. Come back together as a group and debrief
 - A. What Building Blocks feel easiest to access?
 - B. What Building Blocks have fewer resources?
 - C. Who might have a harder time accessing the Building Blocks?
5. If students are interested, you might have them consider coming up with a list of recommendations for school administrators about ways they want to see more access to the Building Blocks at school. This serves two purposes: it helps create more access to the Building Blocks for the kids in your community AND it gives youth an opportunity for engagement!

Have fun with it! This can be a great way to get youth engaged with creating more access to PCEs for themselves and their community.

